



(Photo: Tamarack Golden Branches, Brad Waggoner at Volo Bog State Natural Area)

## **FALL COLOR REPORT -- 11/10/16**

### **Northwest**

Peak color has come and gone in northwest Illinois, but the fall landscape is still seasonally attractive. Oaks still retain their leaves, appearing russet brown to orange or red. Their leaves contrast nicely with the bare trees around them, and with the evergreen white pine and cedar trees. At this time of the year, look along the forest edge and understory; if you see green shrubs, you're seeing bush honeysuckle. Bush honeysuckle is non-native and displaces native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers. The extent to which this shrub has spread and degraded our native ecology is obvious now, because again it will be the only green plant in the understory as native plants have gone dormant. For more information on the control of bush honeysuckle go to the following link: [https://web.extension.illinois.edu/jsweb284/entry\\_6899/](https://web.extension.illinois.edu/jsweb284/entry_6899/)

### **Northeast**

Volo Bog's tamaracks in northern Illinois are providing a second weekend of near-peak color. These deciduous pines turn golden each fall near Halloween then drop their needles in early November. But with the unseasonably warm autumn, they are still hanging onto their needles. Volo Bog State Natural Area is located at 28478 W. Brandenburg Road, Ingleside, IL.

In McHenry County, some maples are still holding on to some orange, yellow, and red. Oaks are showing brown, yellow, and some red. Wind events have taken care of a lot of the fall color, but there is still some out there. Grundy County area color peaked last week.

## **West Central**

Pike, Adams, Scott, Calhoun, Brown, Jersey, Greene, and Macoupin counties: Cottonwood, walnut, and ash leaves have predominantly fallen; sassafras, dogwood, sumac, creeper vines, hickory, and sugar maple are steadily losing leaves, but still exhibit good color (red/yellow/orange/gold). Many oaks are still retaining leaves but are a rusty green. Good color drives are still the River Road -- Route 100 from Alton to Grafton. Other great color drives would be the Eldred Blacktop from Route 100/16 to Route 106; Route 100 from Hardin north to Milton, IL; and Route 100 from Hardin north to Kampsville - Route 96 west from Kampsville through Mozier - and then Route 96 north all of the way to Interstate 36/72.



(Photo: Red leaves of Arrowwood Viburnum, Randy Timmons)

## **Central**

Color is winding down in the Illinois River Valley east of the great bend. Oaks are now going very fast to the rusty red browns with some trees still giving good red color. Understory trees still shout out some yellows and reds. Some of the best yellow this week is on paw paw, sugar maple, bitternut hickory and mulberry. The sumacs are still showing some red in places, and arrow wood viburnum has great red color. Bald cypress trees are going from light green to their copper brown before leaf drop. With the absence of a really hard frost, the trees are holding leaves for a longer period. There is still color in the urban landscape on specimen trees, and they do stand out with the others having turned brown or having dropped their foliage. Many fruits and seeds are now visible, such as the short dark brown pods of redbuds. For those hiking the leaf covered trails of our state parks, remember that they can be very slippery both dry and wet. Get good footing as you go up and down slopes and take your time to avoid injuries. And most of all, please stay on the designated trails.

## **East Central**

The oaks were pretty much the last holdout for color in Coles County, with rusty orange and red still seen on the red oaks and black oaks, with some white oak still displaying reds.

## **South**

The leaves continue to drop in Clinton County. However, the sassafras are just about done with their fall colors, with just a few scattered hints of red left. The sweetgum have lost most of their leaves, but like the sassafras there are a few hints of red leaves left. The red and sugar maples still have some patches of color in their crowns. A few of the hickory still have some yellow leaves on them.

The colors are past their peak in the Fairfield area, but it is still colorful. Sugar maple leaves are one-half or more down, but the ones with leaves are bright. Much of the hickory is now brown with some golden highlights.

Oaks are peaking, with burgundy shades from white oak and burnt oranges from black oak though neither are very brilliant this year in Marion County. Some sugar maples are holding yellow and, to a lesser degree, orange leaves, but greater than 50% have dropped. Silver maple still have 50-75% green turning to yellow leaves, but should change fast with expected frost.

At Fort Massac State Park, there are a lot of oranges and yellows as trees are starting to lose their leaves on windy days -- but still look beautiful.

Leaves are continuing to fall, but the color is slow to peak and the peak may be somewhat muted this year in Randolph County. Many oaks are still completely green, while some are turning. Pretty much all the other trees are peaking or dropping foliage. Lots of trees have dropped all of their leaves. Hickories are still bright yellow and brown, but leaves are falling fast. The trees do not seem to be going through fall colors in a unified fashion this year, perhaps because of the unseasonably warm weather into November.

In Pope County, there is still a moderate amount of color, even with significant leaf drop over the last week.

The oaks are turning but are still predominately green at Cache River State Natural Area. Silver maples are about half and half. Bald cypress are a deep rust color. Hickory are draped in yellow, and leaves are not hanging on long after turning. Many of the other trees are bare. The burst of color seems to have passed, muted by the amount of green of other trees.

At Giant City State Park, a lot of leaves are down, with a little color remaining in some of the maples.

## **Species and color expectations**

### **Oak –red-orange**

### **Hickory – golden bronze**

Sugar maple – orange-red

Black maple – glowing yellow

Aspen – golden yellow

Tulip poplar – golden yellow

Dogwood – purplish red

Sumac – bright red

Virginia creeper – flaming red